

National Register of Electors

Updates: November 2022
Annual Lists of Electors



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Introduction

In accordance with the *Canada Elections Act*, Elections Canada provides lists of electors (containing name, address and unique identifier) to members of Parliament by November 15 of each year and, upon request, to each federal registered party for any electoral district in which the party endorsed a candidate in the last general election or by-election.

This document provides an overview of the primary sources of information used to update the National Register of Electors as well as information on the quality of the lists.

Overview

The data extracted for the above purpose reflect updates to the National Register of Electors (the Register) made on the basis of information obtained from federal, provincial, territorial and municipal administrative sources; lists of electors provided by other electoral agencies; and electors through the Online Voter Registration Service of Elections Canada. Since the 44th general election (held on September 20, 2021), some 262,000 new electors have been added to the Register; the majority (204,000) were between 18 and 24 years old. Records for some 322,000 deceased electors and 13,000 duplicate records have been removed from the lists of electors. In addition, address changes have been made for nearly 3.1 million electors who moved. The current lists also reflect improvements made to address information.

The November 2022 annual lists of electors contain 95.5 percent of the 27.9 million eligible electors (see Table 1). The percentage of eligible electors registered at their current residential address is 89.3 percent, or 24.9 million eligible electors. Among registered electors, 93.5 percent are listed at their current residential address.

All estimates presented in this document are **preliminary**. Elections Canada has mandated Statistics Canada to review and measure the main aspects of the quality of information in the lists of electors. **Final** quality estimates for the November 2022 annual lists of electors and the final lists of electors for the 44th general election will be available in spring 2023. More information regarding this quality review can be found in section 3.5, Reliability of Quality Estimates.

Table 1. Registered and Eligible Electors and Preliminary Quality Estimates: November 2022 Annual Lists of Electors and Final Lists of Electors for the 44th General Election of 2021			
	November 2022 annual lists of electors	Final lists of electors for the 44th general election of 2021	
Registered electors	27,361,250	27,399,912	
Eligible electors ¹	27,905,304	27,608,272	
Coverage (%) ²	95.5	96.9	
Currency (%)	89.3	90.5	
Accuracy (%)	93.5	93.4	

Notes

¹ The electoral population is estimated using information from the 2016 Census of Population and National Household Survey, adjusted for census net undercoverage as well as demographic components of growth.

² Coverage has been adjusted to account for deceased electors, duplicates and non-Canadian citizens. This adjustment is similar to that made in previous years. Currency and accuracy have been adjusted accordingly.

1. Background

The Register is a database of Canadians who are qualified to vote in federal elections. The Register contains the name, gender, date of birth, address and unique identifier of each elector.

Elections Canada uses the information in the Register to produce preliminary lists of electors for federal elections, by-elections and referendums, and to provide lists to members of Parliament by November 15 of each year and, on request, to registered political parties. The *Canada Elections Act* also allows Elections Canada to provide Register data to other jurisdictions (provinces, territories and some municipalities) for electoral purposes, where data-sharing agreements have been signed.

2. Updating

According to Statistics Canada, some 12 percent of elector information typically changes every year. These changes involve moves (9 percent), new 18-year-olds (1 percent), new citizens (1 percent) and deaths (1 percent). To reflect these demographic changes, Elections Canada regularly updates the Register using federal, provincial, territorial and some municipal administrative data sources. It may also be updated using electoral lists from other jurisdictions. Revisions made to lists of electors during federal elections are another important source of updates to the Register. Since the September 2021 general election, the Register has been updated using the following sources and data:

1. **Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).** This source provides the name, address and date of birth of tax filers who indicated that they are at least 18 years old and a Canadian citizen and who consented to their information being provided to Elections Canada. Generally, around 82 percent of tax filers gave their consent on their T1 tax returns.
2. **Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC).** This source provides the name, address, date of birth, gender and date of citizenship conferral of new Canadians who consented to their information being provided to Elections Canada once their citizenship was granted. Generally, 97 percent of new citizens give this consent. In addition, Elections Canada receives periodic information from IRCC regarding permanent residents and foreign nationals, which Elections Canada cross-checks against the information in the Register.
3. **The Register of Future Electors (ROFE).** Established on April 1, 2019, this register contains information (name, date of birth, gender, address, and unique identifier) about young Canadian citizens who are between 14 and 17 years of age and who consented to register with Elections Canada. When they turn 18, they are added to the

National Register of Electors to update the lists of electors for federal elections and referendums. To date, the main ROFE source is the CRA. Since its inception, 325,191 future electors have been added to the National Register of Electors when they reached 18 years old.

4. **Department of National Defence.** This source provides the name, gender, date of birth, service number and address of Canadian Armed Forces electors to update the Register.
5. **Provincial and territorial motor vehicle agencies.** These sources provide driver information from each province and territory, except Quebec, and identification card information from some provinces and territories. For electors residing in Quebec, address updates are obtained solely through that province's permanent voters lists.
6. **Provincial and territorial vital statistics agencies.** These sources provide information on deceased persons from each province and territory, except Quebec. For Quebec, deceased electors' information is obtained through that province's permanent voters lists. The CRA and some provincial and territorial motor vehicle agencies also provide information on deceased persons.
7. **Provincial and territorial electoral lists.** These sources include elector information from the permanent voters lists maintained by Élections Québec and the lists of electors for the Ontario provincial election held in June 2022. Data from the voters lists for the most recent Quebec provincial election and Ontario municipal elections, held in October 2022, are not yet available.
8. **Electoral-initiated updates.** This data is from requests from electors to have their information updated or added to the Register as well as requests to opt out of the Register entirely or out of sharing their information with other jurisdictions. Since the establishment of the Register in 1997, there have been some 14,453 requests to opt out of the Register entirely and some 170 requests to opt out of sharing personal information with other jurisdictions. The electors who have requested to opt out entirely do not appear on the November 2022 annual lists of electors. Since the September 2021 general election, 21,312 changes of address and 22,373 registration requests have been submitted through the Online Voter Registration Service; 1,202 registration or update requests have been submitted through paper forms.
9. **Removal of duplicates.** Regular verifications are done to identify and remove duplicates (individuals for whom more than one record is found) from the Register. Since the September 2021 general election, some 13,000 records have been identified as duplicates and removed from the lists.

3. Quality

The main indicators used to measure the quality of information in the Register are *coverage*, *currency* and *accuracy*. These indicators are described below along with the corresponding estimates for the November 2022 annual lists of electors. See section 3.4 for information on how to interpret these measures.

3.1 Coverage

The percentage of electors included in the Register (coverage) is one of the key indicators used to measure the extent to which Canadians can exercise their democratic right to vote. The current national coverage target is 94 percent.

Coverage measurements involve determining what proportion of the eligible population is represented on the lists. This entails comparing the number of electors on the lists with the estimated number of Canadian citizens aged 18 and over. This makes it possible for Elections Canada to assess the quality of the Register relative to its national coverage target.

Elections Canada prepares estimates of eligible electors based on information provided by Statistics Canada. The 2016 Census of Population serves as the baseline for the estimates, which are adjusted for census net undercoverage. A demographic component approach is used to derive estimates at the electoral district level using detailed information on new adults, deceased electors, new citizens, electors who move between electoral districts and electors leaving the country permanently. This information is used to estimate demographic changes on a monthly basis. The sum of the electoral district estimates provides provincial, territorial and national estimates. The time elapsed since the 2016 Census of Population will likely affect the quality of the eligible population estimates. Data from the 2021 Census of Population, including the number of citizens, are expected in November 2022. This data will be used to revise estimates of eligible electors, and in turn the quality estimates.

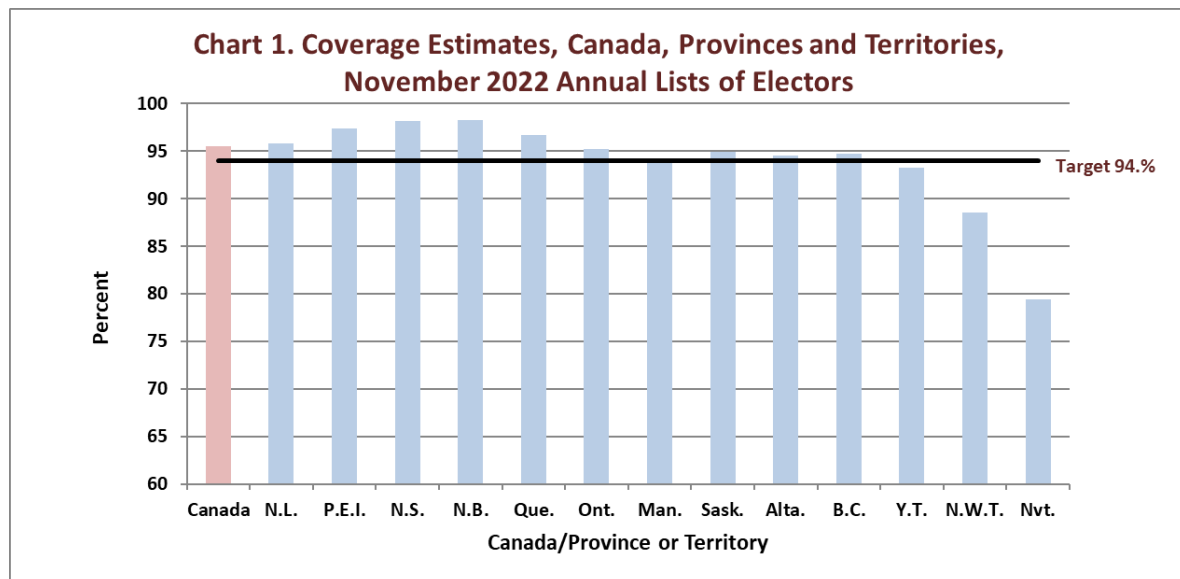
Coverage estimates for Canada and the provinces and territories are shown in Chart 1 and Table 2 (below). A comparison of estimates of registered electors with estimates of eligible electors indicates that the November 2022 annual lists include some 95.5 percent of electors—which is higher than the established Elections Canada target of 94 percent. As outlined in Elections Canada’s Departmental Plan, this target will increase to 95 percent as of March 2023.

Some 13,000 electors do not appear on the lists because their address has not yet been assigned to an electoral district or a polling division.

Coverage may vary by region because of various factors:

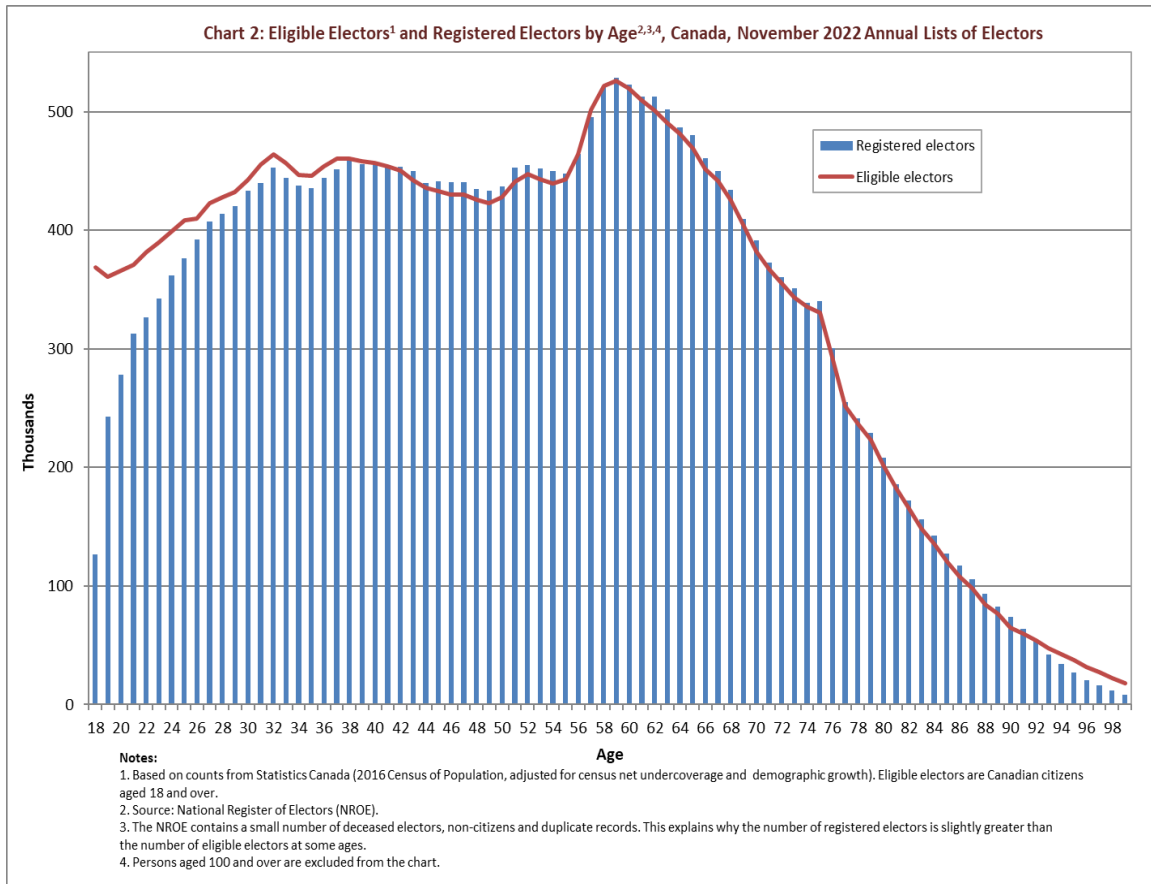
- Demographic changes.
- Availability of data sources used to update the Register.
- Rates of consent to share information.
- Information for some people does not appear in any administrative files used for updating purposes.
- Some records cannot be positively matched with information held in the Register.
- Time between the occurrence of demographic changes and the reception and processing of information by Elections Canada.

The coverage of lists of electors in all provinces are above the national target of 94 percent. Among the territories, Yukon has a coverage just below the national target. Higher demographic growth partly explains the lower coverage of the lists in the Northwest Territories and Nunavut.



Registration of young electors poses additional challenges, as the information from administrative sources may be available to Elections Canada only several months after these electors reach voting age. Initiatives involving feeder groups (future electors under 18 years of age) are under way, which should help reduce the coverage gap for young electors over time (see sections 2 and 4.1).

Chart 2 illustrates that the gap between registered electors and eligible electors decreases steadily with age. Electors who have recently become eligible to vote (18-year-olds) represent the largest gap: only 127,000 out of 369,000 of newly eligible electors are registered. The gap decreases considerably for 19-year-olds (243,000 out of 361,000 are registered) and continues to decrease up to the age of 40. After that age, the Register contains information for nearly all eligible electors.



3.2 Currency

The second measure of the quality of the lists is the currency of electors' addresses. Measuring the currency of the lists comes down to answering the following question: What proportion of eligible electors are registered at their current address?

The currency of lists is estimated by comparing the number of updates made to electors' addresses in the Register with the estimated number of moves in each region of the country based on mobility rates provided by Statistics Canada. Updating addresses presents a number of challenges. In addition to the factors listed above, the high number of moves and the variations by region could also explain differences in currency. That is why the national currency target of 80 percent is set lower than the coverage target.

Currency estimates for Canada and the provinces and territories are provided in Table 2 below. Eligible electors across the country are registered at their current address at a rate of 89.3 percent. The currency rate of lists is above 80 percent (the national target) in all provinces and territories, excluding Nunavut. The lower currency rate of Nunavut is partly explained by the lower coverage and higher mobility rate. Various measures are put in place locally at election time to improve these lists.

3.3 Accuracy

Accuracy of the electoral lists is determined by dividing the currency estimates by the coverage estimates.

Whereas currency indicates the proportion of all eligible electors registered at their current address, accuracy measures the proportion of **registered** electors listed at their current address. See section 3.4 for information on how to interpret these measures.

Among electors appearing on the November 2022 annual lists of electors, an estimated 93.5 percent have current residential address information. In all provinces and territories except Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Yukon and Nunavut, over 9 registered electors out of 10 are listed at their current address.

Table 2. Estimated Percentages of Coverage, Currency and Accuracy¹ for Canada and the Provinces and Territories, November 2022 Annual Lists of Electors			
	Coverage (national target 94%)	Currency (national target 80%)	Accuracy
Canada	95.5	89.3	93.5
Newfoundland and Labrador	95.8	85.5	89.2
Prince Edward Island	97.4	91.5	93.9
Nova Scotia	98.1	88.1	89.8
New Brunswick	98.3	89.4	90.9
Quebec	96.7	92.4	95.6
Ontario	95.2	89.4	93.9
Manitoba	94.2	86.4	91.7
Saskatchewan	95.0	87.4	92.0
Alberta	94.5	85.9	90.9
British Columbia	94.7	88.5	93.4
Yukon	93.3	80.8	86.6
Northwest Territories	88.5	80.5	90.9
Nunavut	79.4	61.6	77.6

¹ The estimates are adjusted for deceased electors, duplicates and non-Canadian citizens. The quality estimates are subject to sampling errors. See section 3.5, Reliability of Quality Estimates.

3.4 Interpretation

To better understand the practical impact of the quality indicators of the lists, it is important to consider how the data are used in a federal election, by-election or referendum. Shortly after an electoral event is called, voter information cards (VICs) are mailed to electors appearing on the preliminary lists of electors that are extracted from the Register. More than 9 out of 10 registered electors will receive a VIC addressed to them that correctly indicates where they can vote in their electoral district (accuracy).

During an electoral event, returning officers provide candidates with a *Statement of Quality of the Preliminary Lists of Electors*. This document provides quality measures and estimated revision volumes for their electoral district. For example, lower currency estimates may result in a higher number of revisions or polling day registrations. The document also contains counts that reflect recent activities to improve the lists as well as targeted revision plans. The Chief Electoral Officer instructs each returning officer to discuss list quality issues with candidates during the candidates' briefing meeting, which must be held shortly after all candidates have been confirmed. Candidates are encouraged to raise questions and issues concerning the revision process and to advise the returning officer if they believe areas of the electoral district could benefit from additional targeted revision efforts.

3.5 Reliability of Quality Estimates

Elections Canada conducted the sixth iteration of its national Data Quality Confirmation Study (DQCS) in 2020. Previous studies took place between 2006 and 2018. Another study is under way. The purpose of the study is to provide an independent assessment of the quality indicators of lists of electors.

In the past, Elections Canada conducted surveys to assess its quality indicators. After sampling elector records from the Register, these electors were asked to confirm their personal information. As it was becoming more and more difficult to reach electors, the chosen approach since 2018 involves a partnership with Statistics Canada and a shift from a survey-based approach to a record linkage one. Records from the Register are matched with various complete and reliable data sources held by Statistics Canada. This results in a more comprehensive evaluation, reduced costs and improved quality indicators. However, there is a margin of error associated with these quality indicators, as they are produced using several estimates, including estimates of the eligible population as outlined in section 3.1 above. While this margin of error is difficult to measure, owing to the multiple components involved in producing the quality indicators, it is deemed to be acceptable.

The 2020 DQCS results serve as the baseline to produce the quality indicators for the November 2022 annual lists of electors included in this document. As mentioned in the Overview, results from the 2022 DQCS will be used to produce the **final** quality

estimates for the November 2022 annual lists of electors and the **final** lists of electors for the 44th general election. These estimates will be available in spring 2023.

4. Future Plans

4.1 Register of Future Electors

Since 2020, Elections Canada has increased its coverage rate for young electors by collecting information about Canadians between 14 and 17 years of age who consent to be included in the ROFE. To do so, Elections Canada has been working with various provincial and territorial electoral partners and data suppliers to update information-sharing agreements whenever possible; such updates enable Elections Canada to obtain information on youth and thereby continue to maintain the ROFE. To date, 14 agreements have been completed and work continues on others. Future electors can also contact Elections Canada directly to be added to the ROFE. As of October 2022, there were 126,894 future electors between 14 and 17 years of age in the ROFE, which represents 8.3% of the estimated Canadian population in this age range. Coverage of 17-year-olds in the ROFE is however at 17.8%. Elections Canada is planning to offer an online registration option for future electors in the next year or so, which will provide more opportunities for outreach and civic education activities. All these efforts will enable Elections Canada to add a greater proportion of new electors and increase youth coverage in the Register over time.

5. Conclusion

Elections Canada estimates that the November 2022 annual lists of electors derived from the Register include around 95.5 percent of the 27.9 million eligible electors and that 89.3 percent of the eligible electors are registered at their current address. The proportion of registered electors listed at their current address is estimated at 93.5 percent.

Although national estimates are above the national targets, it is important that electors and political entities understand that Register activities continue throughout the year and that revision procedures are essential to maintaining this level of quality.

It is ultimately up to electors to verify with Elections Canada that they are registered and that their information is up to date.